

A
S E R M O N

P R E A C H E D

O N T H E

F a s t - D a y ,

N O V E M B E R the xiiith 1678.

Being appointed for

F a s t i n g and P r a y e r .

B Y

B E N J A M I N G A M F I E L D ,

Rector of *Aylston* near *Leicester*.

L O N D O N ,

Printed by *J. Macock*, for *Henry Brome* at the
Gun, at the West-end of *S^t Pauls*.

M D C L X X V I I I .



Imprimatur,

Carolus Alfston, R. P. D.

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A

SERMON

ON

PSALM xviii. v. 2. (but in the last
Translation v. 3.)

*I will call on the Lord, who is worthy
to be praised: so shall I be safe from
mine Enemies.*



T is not long, since we were As-
sembled, on the *fifth* of this Month,
to Bless and Praise God for his
wonderful Mercies to this King-
dom in the seasonable Discovery and Defeat-
ing of our *Romish* Enemies most wicked and
accursed Powder-Plot; which had it taken
effect, all had been Entomb'd on a suddain
in one common Ruine.

And now, upon notice publickly given,
That the same kind of Agents are at work a-

B

gain,

(Em) 14/12/01 (m2)

gain, in another way, to Destroy both His Sacred Majesty, and with Him our Liberties and Religion; we are, by the warrant of Authority, met together here this day, to call upon that God, who alone is able to protect and save us, and whose undeserved goodness we have had so much experience of hitherto, that he would be pleased graciously to continue, yet to defend both our King and Country, and bring to light, still more and more, all secret machinations against his Majesty and the whole Kingdom.

To which purpose therefore I could not think of any thing more pertinent and agreeable, both to Direct us in our present Duty, and Encourage us to the same, than the words I have read from the Royal Psalmist.

I will call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised: so shall I be safe from mine Enemies.

This Psalm was a Publick Form of Devotion Composed, and appointed by King David for the solemn seasons set apart to Commemorate his manifold Deliverances and Victories; for all the dayes, wherein God had delivered him; as the Chaldee Paraphrast hath it. And it hath the Honour to be twice Registred in Holy Writ, with very little variation in the words of

of it. For you may read it in the 22^d Chap. of the 2^d Book of *Samuel*, as well as here in the Book of *Psalms*.

From whence we may plainly collect, That, however some of This Generation quarrel and except against set Forms of Divine Worship and Service, to cast dirt upon the established Religion, and make way for New-fangled Devices of their own, rather than Godly Edifying in Love and Unity; yet it was not so in the Church of God from the Beginning; but both a publick Form was wont to be prescribed, and upon like occasions one and the same Form was without scruple made use of. And that by the Counsel and Countenance of no meaner a Person than King *David* himself, who is recommended to us as an eminent Servant of God, both in his private and Regal Capacity, a man *after* Acts 13. 22. *Gods own heart*, as he himself hath testified of him.

So much we have sufficiently intimated in the very Title of this Psalm, which was inscrib'd to the chief Musician or Prefect of Musick, the Master of the Choire, to be sung upon publick Solemnities. ---*To the chief Musician. A Psalm of David the servant of the Lord,*

See Dr. H. in
loc.

who spake unto the Lord the words of this Song, in the Day that the Lord deliver'd him from the hand of all his Enemies, and from the hand of Saul. And he said, Viz. as followeth ; that is, A Publick Form of Worship, or Religious Acknowledgment indited by *David* that eminent Servant of the Lord, in Commemoration of those many Preservations and Victories which God had vouchsafed him, and his now quiet settlement in the Kingdom of *Israel* and *Judah*, by the interposure of the Divine Providence in subduing the *Philistines*, *Syrians*, *Moabites* and *Ammonites*, that rose up against him ; in quieting the Rebellion of *Absalom*, his son *Absalom*, (soon after which it is recorded, 2 Sam. 22.) but especially in rescuing him out of the malicious bloody hands of *Saul*. This he composed, and committed to the chief Musician, as a suitable service for those solemn Dayes, wherein there should be occasion to commemorate his Deliverances and Victories. And to that purpose it continues registred in the Book of *Psalms*, among many other, as a Pattern and Example unto all Posterities ; and a Justification, as I said, beyond all contradiction, both of the lawfulness and expediencie of Publick Forms of Devotion, and the

the use or Repetition of the same Forms upon like occasion.

I shall not now go about to unravel the Contexture of the whole Psalm, because I would not divert your attention from that plenty of good and proper Meditations, which the Text alone suggests unto us. Wherein we have these two principal parts :

1. *David's holy Resolution or Practice ; I will call on the Lord, who is worthy to be praised.* And,

2. *The Motive he had thereunto from the assured success of it ; So shall I be (saved or) safe from mine enemies.*

Of which therefore now by God's help, I shall treat in order, as they lie.

And First of the Psalmist's holy Resolution or Practice ; *I will call on the Lord, who is worthy to be praised.* Wherein we may consider, yet more distinctly, these three Particulars.

1. *The Person whose Example we have before our eyes, together with the Circumstances of his Condition, [I] King David, the Servant of the Lord, preserved and deliver'd by him from many potent Enemies already, and yet not without the Fear and prospect of others succeeding afresh, and growing up in the room of them.*

2. *The*

2. The *Act or Practice* it self resolved upon, *Calling upon the Lord*; which, as I shall take occasion to shew you, was all along his most Religious Custom, as well as Resolution in like Cases for the Future. And then,

3. The special Character here annexed unto the *Object* of his Invocation, Worship and Devotion; *The Lord who is worthy to be praised. I will call on the Lord, who is worthy to be praised.*

First, The Person here spoken of; the [I] in the Text. That is *David*, a pious and Religious King, styled in the Title of the Psalm, *The Servant of the Lord*, as I told you.

Religion, we see, is not a vile or mean Performance; is not a thing below the Highest and most eminent Monarchs of the World; no disparagement at all unto their Greatness, but that which is indeed the chiefest Ornament in their Diadem and Crown of Glory. They have the same Essential Dependence upon God with other men, and He the same Right and Title of Sovereignty and Dominion over Them, being *King of Kings, and Lord of Lords*. Nay, They have an Obligation above others to serve and Honour God Almighty; not only as his Reasonable Creatures

tures and Dependents like unto others, but as his peculiar Ministers and Servants, in their Sacred Office as Kings, exalted and upheld by him in that their Dignity.

Again, Their Necessity as well as place engageth them hereunto: for they are surrounded with those Dangers and Troubles, which none but God alone, the Supreme Potentate, can preserve or deliver them in and from. No sooner have they escaped one Plot and Contrivance of mischief, but another Snare is laying for them. The *Hydra* of Treason and Rebellion hath many Heads; and when one is cut off, another perks up in its stead.

Such was *David's* Condition. And we need not to look further than *This Psalm* for an ample proof of it. Here we read of the sorrows of *Death and Hell* compassing him: The snares of *Death* preventing him: The Floods of ungodly men making him afraid. The Sons of Belial, men impatient of the Yoke of Government and Restraint, coming like a mighty Torrent upon him: Many waters threatening to overflow and drown him; Blood-thirsty, powerful and malicious Enemies, such as hated him, and were too strong for him, rising up against him.

Verses 4, 5.

Verse 16.

Verse 17.

Verse 35.

Verse 43.

Verse 48.

Verse 44.

Verse 6.

Verse 18, 19.

him. And those not only of Forraign Nations but amongst his own People. *The strivings of the people*; nor only making open Insurrections, but endeavouring private Assassinations by *men of violence*; and those too secret and unknown; Dissembling and False-hearted Subjects, such as *yielded feigned Obedience*, such as *lied unto him in all their fair professions, and dissembled with him*, as the old Translation hath it. No wonder therefore that we find him *in his Distresse*, and in a *Day of Calamity*; and as it were in *Prison and Confinement*, in great straits; sometimes in a state of War, and at other times in great Perils.

Such is the condition of all Kings, especially of Pious and Religious Kings. For the King is the head of Order, and the very life and soul of Laws, both Civil and Sacred. So many Enemies therefore as there are abroad, to a State or Kingdom, their level is chiefly, neither at small or great, but at the Head and Soul of all the rest. The Devil and his Agents are all Adversaries to Order, and Quiet, and Peace, with Piety and Virtue; and therefore must necessarily impugn and strike at the grand Conservator of all these. And then, in his own Dominions, if we reckon up, how many there

there alwayes be, that are in ill Circumstances themselves; and have their hopes only in a Change, in fishing, as we say, in troubled Waters; in disturbing all, that they may scramble for somewhat; How many Ambitious of Rule and Power themselves, that would fain be uppermost: How many envious at all above them, who therefore are ready to pull them down or undermine them: How many thirsting for Liberty, unbounded Liberty, to do whatsoever is good in their own Eyes: How many cross'd in their undue Desires and Lusts, by the severity of good and wholesome Laws: How many whose Faith and Allegiance is easily corrupted by the popular insinuations and pretences of wheedling Demagogues, or to be bought and sold with Bribes and Pensions: How very few of Courage and Honesty enough to stick by a Prince in his low Condition: How many Powers, and Policies, and Devices he hath continually to watch over, and to struggle with: How many he must of necessity trust and imploy, whom he hath but little or slender assurance of: If we consider, I say, but these, and the like obvious Circumstances, we cannot but see the manifold Troubles, and Miseries, and

Calamities, that every Prince, every good and Religious Prince especially, is beset withal. As *David*, we read, was.

But the greatest comfort is, He hath a Refuge and Sanctuary near at hand, notwithstanding all this, to betake himself unto; namely that of the Text. *I will call upon the Lord.* This we find upon all occasions was our Royal Psalmists stay and security. When He knew not what to do, nor whither to betake himself, his Eyes were still unto God. God, saith he, *is our refuge and strength: a very present help in Trouble. Therefore will we not fear, &c.*

Psal. 46.

*Si fractus illabatur orbis,
Impavidum serient ruinae.*

1 Sam. 30. 6.

Thus at Ziklag; *David*, saith the text, was greatly distressed: for the people spake of stoning of him, because the soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his Sons, and for his Daughters: (and when any thing goes amiss, or succeeds ill in Government, the blame and complaints usually fix and center on the chief Governour) but *David* encouraged himself in the Lord his God. He becalmed himself, as we read elsewhere, with such like expostulations as These. *Why art thou*

Psal. 42.

thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou
 disquieted within me? Hope thou in God, for I ^{Psal. 43.}
 shall yet praise him, who is the Health of my
 countenance and my God. Observe therefore, by
 how many different Names and Attributes of
 security he calls God in the Verse before our
 Text, on purpose, as it were, to declare,
 That he was *All in All* in his account: My
 Strength; saith he, and my Rock, and my For- ^{Psal. 18. 1.}
 tress, and my Deliverer: my Buckler, and the Horn
 of my Salvation, (that is, according to the He-
 brew Idiom, wherein Horn is used for Power
 and Plenty, my most Powerful and All-suffici-
 ent Saviour) and my High-Tower. In weakness,
 my Strength; against the Storm and Billows
 of Adversity, and that Ocean of Calamity,
 which beats at any time upon me, my Rock
 impregnable; against all manner of Violence
 or Assaults, my Fortrefs or Bul-work, my
 Shield and Buckler invulnerable; whatever
 Hosts or Armies invade me, my High-Tower
 and Castle; at all Times and in all Cases a
 most mighty and abundant Saviour and
 Deliverer. They are excellent words of the
 Prophet *Habakkuk*, which I the rather men- ^{Hab. 3. 17, 18,}
 tion, because the later part of them is taken ^{19.}
 out of *this Psalm*. *Although the Fig-tree shall not* ^{Psal. 18. 32, 33.}
 blossom,

blossom, neither shall Fruit be in the Vines; the labour of the Olive shall fail, and the Fields shall yield no meat; the Flock shall be cut off from the Fold, and there shall be no Herd in the Stalls: (that is, all visible help and relief shall fail) Yet will I rejoyce in the Lord: I will joy in the God of my Salvation. The Lord God is my strength, and he will make my feet like Hinds feet, and He will make me to walk on my High-places--- There can be no possible want of provisions to this High-Tower or Garrison.

We see, by the way, what an utter Enemy the profess'd Atheist is to all publick Governments, and the best security of Kings and Princes †, who by denying God and Providence takes away this most Comfortable Refuge and Sanctuary, which amidst all Perils and Dangers they are to betake themselves unto. It is the Character of such profane ones, *That they call not upon God themselves*: and that is not all the mischief of it, but thy seek to deprive others also of this blessed Privilege; whilst they say, either, *There is no God*, or that *He sees not, hears not, regards not his Supplicants*. It is therefore the undoubted concernment of every State to suppress and banish Atheism, with all the Fautors of it.

But

† Τὸς ἀνοθεύ
Βονδεύας—
χρεία πολλῆς
τῆς ἀνοθεύ
ἐν ποταμῷ. D.
Chrysost. in
Psal. 143. 2.
& 10.

Psal. 14.

Psal. 53.

But hitherto of the first particular the Person whose good Example we have here before our eyes, That Religious and pious King *David*; who was always sensible of his Obligations to God, and how impossible it was for himself or any other Prince, to be safe and secure without the aids of Heaven.

In the Second place we are to consider further of him in Conjunction with the Holy Practice here resolv'd upon. *I will call on the Lord.*

Calling upon God is a Phrase sometimes put in Scripture for all Religion, as it is usual there for some signal act to stand for and expresse all the rest of the kind. But here we are to understand it in its most proper importance, viz. an Invocation by Prayer and Supplication unto God, whereby he betakes himself to the Divine Protection, begging Safety and Deliverance from him. And the words are rendred by Interpreters in *several Tenses.*

As to the *Time past*, *Invocabam*; *I did call on* Piscator. *the Lord, so was I saved from mine Enemies.* And Thus we have it afterwards, *Vers. 6.* *In my Distress I called upon the Lord, and cryed unto my God; He heard my voice out of his holy Temple, and my cry came before him, even into his ears.*

The

See Verse 7.
to vers. 16.
& Dr. H. Par.

The effects of which audience are magnificently set forth in the following Verses. How he express'd the Wrath of an All-powerful God, able to make the World to Tremble, nay to burn and consume it, interposing his hand as signally, as if he had descended in a black thick Cloud with a mighty wind, and the appearance of Angels in shining Garments, with tempestuous showers of Hail and Fire; with Thundrings and Lightnings, as with Arrows and fiery Darts, and finally with the same Notoriety of his Presence, as when the waters of the Sea were driven back by a strong East-wind, and the Deep turned into dry ground for the passage of his People Israel.

Fun. & Them.
Vatabl.

Others read it in the *present Tense*: *Invoco*, or *Invocare soleo*: I do call upon the Lord; This is my constant Practice and Custom. *I call upon the Lord--- so am I safe from mine Enemies.* See the 142^d Psalm. *The Prayer of David when he was in the Cave.* 'When he poured
'out his Complaint before God, and shewed
'him his trouble, How a Snare was privily
'laid for him in the way wherein he walked,
'and he had none that he could trust to for
'Refuge, none that regarded or cared for him;
'His

‘His Soul in Prison, and his Persecutors about
 ‘him, stronger than he. But he betakes him-
 self to This his wonted Practice, *vers.* 5, &c.
I cried unto Thee, O Lord; I said, Thou art my
portion in the land of the living. Attend unto my
cry, for I am brought very low; deliver me from
my Persecutors, for they are stronger than I; bring
my Soul out of Prison, that I may praise thy
Name.

Others again read it, as we do, both in LXXII.
Vulg. Lat.
 our Old and New Translation, in the *Future*
Tense. Invocabo, I will call on the Lord. And
 thus, what was his Religious Practice and
 Custom in times past and at present, becomes
 also his pious and holy Resolution for the
 Time to come; as we find it frequently else-
 where repeated by him. *Psal.* 55. Having
 spoken of the Hellish Plots of some, that had
 been his Intimates and Familiars, from which
 he hardly saw any humane possibility of esca-
 ping; *I mourn in my complaint, saith he, because*
of the voice of the enemy, because of the oppression
of the wicked. ‘The enemy crieth so, and the
 ‘ungodly cometh on so fast; for they are
 ‘minded to do me some mischief: so malici-
 ‘ously are they set against me. My heart is
 ‘disquieted within me, and the Fear of Death
 ‘is

is fallen upon me. Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me, and horror hath overwhelmed me; and I said, O that I had wings like a Dove! for then would I flee away, and be at rest: Lo, then would I wander far off, and remain in the Wilderness; I would hasten my escape from the Fiery storm and Tempest. Destroy, O Lord, and divide their tongues, for I have seen violence and strife in the City. Day and Night they go about it, upon the walls thereof; mischief also and sorrow are in the midst of it. Wickedness is in the midst thereof; deceit and guile depart not from her streets. For it was not an Enemy that reproached me; (an open professed, and known Enemy) then I could have born it; neither was it he that hated me, that did magnifie himself against me; then I would have hid my self from him. But it was Thou, a man mine Equal, (a Man according to my rank, as the Margin reads it) my Guide and mine Acquaintance: We took sweet Counsel together, and walked to the House of God in company. You see, what a copious and pathetical description he gives of his imminent Danger and Troubles. See now his Resolution under all This; the Sanctuary he betakes himself unto, *vers.* 16, &c. *As for me, I will call upon God, and the Lord shall save me. Evening and Morning and at Noon*

Noon will I pray and cry aloud, and he shall hear my voice. He hath deliver'd my Soul in peace from the Battail that was against me; for there were many wils on me. [He reckon'd upon God alone as a mighty and strong Host, and from his former experience he concludes for the Future] Yea even God, that endureth for ever (the same God still) shall hear me, and bring them down, even to the Pit of Destruction. Again, Psal. 86. Bow down thine ear, O Lord, (saith he) hear me, for I am poor and needy. Preserve my Soul, for I am Holy, (thine Anointed, one whom thou favour'st, as the Margin hath it) O thou my God, save thy servant that trusteth in thee. Be merciful unto me, O Lord, for I cry unto thee daily (or, all the day); Rejoice the Soul of thy servant; for unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul. This, we see, was his devout Practice. Then, for his Resolution so to continue, vers. 7. In the Day of my Trouble I will call upon thee, for thou wilt answer me. I will turn you but to one place more, Psal. 116. which begins with an hearty Profession of his Affections to God from the sense of his Mercies and Deliverances; (as this 18th Psalm doth,) I love the Lord, because he hath heard my voice and my supplication; because he hath inclined his ear unto me, (which suppo-

seth his former practice of This Religious duty) Therefore will I call upon him as long as I live; (in my days, saith the Margin, viz. all the days of my trouble, distress, and calamity more especially.) And so he goes on to fortifie his Resolution by a further Commemoration of his former practice This way, and the blessed success of it. *The sorrows of Death compassed me, and the pains of Hell gat hold upon me, (as we have it also in the 18th Psalm,) I found trouble and sorrow; then called I upon the Name of the Lord; O Lord, I beseech thee, deliver my Soul. Gracious is the Lord and righteous; yea our God is merciful. The Lord preserveth the simple, (the plain, honest, upright man, who relieth on him, when he is void of counsel to help himself) I was brought low, and He helped me.*

There is nothing certainly more proper in a Time of Affliction, Calamity and Trouble, than this Religious practice of Calling upon the Lord. Is any among you afflicted? saith St. James, let him pray. Call upon me (saith God himself) in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorifie me. Such therefore was the message of King Hezekiah unto Isaiah the Prophet. This is a day of trouble and rebuke and blasphemy, where

Jam. 5. 13.

Psal. 50. 15.

2 King 19. 3, 4.

wherefore lift up thy Prayer for the Remnant that is left.

Even Nature at such a time of extremity prompts us to this piece of Religion. The Atheistical Poet acknowledgeth it to be the common Practice of Mankind;

——— *Multôq; in rebus acerbis
Acrius advertunt animas ad Relligionem.*

Lucr. l. 3.

Men in their Pains and Adversities are very apt to cry out, Lord help us! This the Prophet notes in a people that were otherwise forgetful of God. Lord, in trouble have they visited thee; they have poured out a Prayer when thy Chastening was upon them. Like as a woman with Child, that draweth near the time of her deliverance, and cryeth out in her pangs, so have we been in thy sight; O Lord. You have many Instances together in Psal. 107. how men cry unto God in their troubles, and he delivereth and saveth them out of their Distresses; particularly of them who go down to the Sea in Ships; when the stormie wind riseth, and they are at their wits ends, Vers. 27, 28. Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble. Hence we have a common Proverb, *Qui nescit orare, discat navigare*: He that knows not to Pray, let him go to Sea; where the

Iſa. 26. 16, 17.

Jonah 1. 5.

Verse 6.

Verse 14.

Math. 8.

sight of so many Dangers, ready to swallow up and devour him, is supposed to be sufficient to teach him This Lesson. Unless he have contracted an unnatural Hardness, and senselessness both of God and Death, the Fears of Shipwrack will awaken him to Prayer. The Mariners, we read, in the storm, *cry'd every man to his God*, and the Ship-master comes to *Jonah*, and saith unto him, *What meanest thou, O sleeper? arise, call upon thy God, if so be that God will think upon us, that we perish not.* And we find them all afterwards, importunately at their Prayers. *They cry'd unto the Lord and said, we beseech thee, O Lord, we beseech thee.* The Disciples in a Tempest awaken our Blessed Saviour, saying, *Lord, save us, we perish.*

Ljb. 1. p. 17.

This, I say, is the natural and constant Practice of All that have any regard to themselves or sense of a Deity, that have not sinn'd themselves into a blockish stupidity, past feeling, in the time of imminent Troubles and Dangers and Calamities, to call upon God. And this is urged by *Salvian* as a strong Conviction against the Denyers of God Almighty's Providence. [*Cur ad cœlum quotidie manus tendimus? &c.*] 'Why stretch we our hands daily towards Heaven? Why seek we the
' Mercy

‘Mercy of God by our repeated Prayers ?

‘Why do we run to Temples and Churches ?

‘Why do we supplicate on our knees before

‘Altars ? [*Nulla enim nobis est ratio precandi, si spes tollitur impetrandi.*] ‘We have no reason

‘at all to pray, if we have no hope left us

‘of speeding by it. And the Heathen Seneca,

before him, managed this argument against

the Epicureans, who allow’d of such kind of

insignificant Deities, who neither heard nor

regarded the Prayers of their Supplicants.

[*Nec in hunc furorem omnes mortales consensissent alloquendi furda humina & inefficaces Deos.* *De Benef. l. 4. c. 4.*]

‘is no ways likely or credible, saith he, that

‘all mortals should consent together in such

‘a point of Madness as this is, continually to

‘call upon Deaf Gods, and such as can do

‘nothing for them.

Nevertheless, it must be granted, that all

who call upon God, do not speed in their

Requests ; because, as St. James hath it, *Jam. 4. 3.* they

ask amiss. Ye ask and receive not, saith he, be-

cause ye ask amiss. And therefore it will be

requisite, before I leave this subject, to shew

you briefly what are the qualifications of such

a Calling upon God, as we may be assured

of the Good effects of.

These

These Qualifications now are reducible unto Three heads.

The First, concerning the Object of our Invocation, whom we are to call upon. That must be the Lord, and the Lord only.

Secondly, As to the Person Praying; He must be Righteous, at least in the Evangelical sense, that is, a True Penitent.

Thirdly, As to the Prayer or Invocation itself, That must be with Humility and Reverence; with Faith; with Sincerity; with Fervency; with Charity; with Perseverance; with a due Submission to the Divine Will; tendered up to God in the Name of Christ; and attended with Endeavours agreeable to our Prayers.

I shall little more than touch upon the particulars, they are so many; (and I would not prevent my self in what else remains :) But yet it is plainly necessary, that I say somewhat of them, because without attendance unto *These things*, our Prayers will certainly prove ineffectual, and vain Oblations. And as good, you know, not at all, as to no purpose.

First then, The Object of our Invocation must be the Lord Jehovah, the True and Living God, and none besides him. *I will call*

on the Lord. Prayer is a piece of Divine worship peculiar unto God, and which we cannot without peril of Idolatry give unto any other. And therefore it is one of the Arguments, used by the Antient Fathers as well as Modern Divines, to prove the Deity of our Blessed Saviour; because we are taught to Call upon his Name. So we read of St. Stephen, *They stoned Stephen* Act. 5. 39. *calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus receive my Soul!* Saying, Lord Jesus, he called upon God. That is, owned his Deity. And this is the Paraphrase, whereby Christians were at first known. *They that called on this Name.* Act. 9. 14-21. *All that in every place call on the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ.* 1 Cor. 1. 2. (*Carmen Christo, quasi Deo, dicere secum invicem.* As Plinie reports of them.) Whatsoever we Religiously call upon, we either find or make a God to our selves, by that very invocation. L. 10. Ep. 97.

The Lord then is He, whom we are to direct our Prayers unto; the Living God, and not Dead Idols; the Lord of all, and not any of his Creatures, nor the best of them, Saints or Angels.

As for Idols, you may remember what *Elijah* said to *Baal's Priests*, *Call ye on the Name of your Gods; and I will call on the Name of the Lord.* 1 King. 18. 24.

Verse 26.

Lord. Accordingly, they called on the Name of Baal, we read, from morning even until noon, saying, O Baal hear, or answer us. But there was no voice, neither any that answered. And Elijah

Verse 27.

mocks them upon it. Cry aloud, for he is a God, he is talking (or meditateth, that is, in a deep study) or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth and must be awaked.

Psal. 115.

Their Idols, saith the Psalmist of the Heathen, are Silver and Gold, the work of mens hands.

Psal. 135.

They have mouths, but they speak not; eyes have they, but they see not; ears, but they hear not, &c.

They that make them are like unto them: so is every one that trusteth in them. O Israel trust thou in

the Lord; He is their Help and their Shield, &c.

q. d. Aid and Defence is to be had from Him and from him only.

Psal. 20. 7, 8.

We must renounce all Confidence and Dependence upon any other thing whatsoever. Some

trust in Chariots, and some in Horses; but we will remember the Name of the Lord our God. They

are brought down and fallen, but we are risen and stand upright. The Name of the Lord is a strong-

Prov. 18. 10.

Tower; the Righteous runneth into it, and is safe.

Hos. 13. 10, 11.

God is offended, when we seek other Refuges: The Pride of Israel, saith the Prophet,

testifieth

teſtifieth to his Face, and they do not return to the Lord their God, nor ſeek Him for all this. Ephraim alſo is like a ſilly Dove without heart; They call to Egypt; They go to Affyria, &c. Thus ſaith the Lord, Cursed be the man, that truſteth in man, and maketh fleſh his arm, and whoſe heart departeth from the Lord. For he ſhall be like the Heath in the Deſert, &c. Blessed be the man, who truſteth in the Lord, and whoſe hope the Lord is. For he ſhall be as a Tree planted by the Waters, &c. It is the Character of the Ungodly; Lo, This is the man, that took not God for his Strength, but truſted unto the multitude of his Riches †.

Jer. 17. 5, 6, 7, 8.

Pſal. 52. 8.

† See Pſal. 62. 8, 9, 10.

Neither may we call upon Saints or Angels to help us, for they are all God's Creatures and Servants as well as we; they reſuſe this Worſhip at our hands, and bid us give it unto God only, whom they together with us adore. I may here uſe the words of Eliphaz (which yet ſome of the Romiſh Church have been ſo abſurd, as to quote for the invocation of Angels) Call now, if there be any that will anſwer thee; and to which of the Saints wilt thou turn?

Rev. 19. 10. —22. 9.

Chamier Fanſtrat. Vol. 2. l. 2. c. 2.

Job 5. 1.

Secondly, As to the perſon invoking, he muſt be Righteous, at leaſt in the Goſpel acceptance, that is, a ſincere and hearty Peni-

E

tent.

John 9. 31. tent. For God beareth not Sinners, viz. Such as
 Prov. 15. 8-- continue in a course of Sin. The Prayer or Sa-
 29. crifice of the wicked is an abomination to him. Unto
 Psal. 50. the wicked saith God, What hast thou to do to take
 my Covenant into thy mouth, seeing thou hatest to
 Prov. 1. 28, &c. be reformed? To such he threatens; They shall
 28. 9. call upon me, but I will not answer. He that turn-
 eth away his Ear from hearing the Law, his Prayer
 shall be an abomination. To such he saith a-
 gain, When ye spread forth your Hands, I will
 Isa. 1. 15, &c. hide mine Eyes from you: Yea, when ye make many
 Prayers, I will not hear. Your Hands are full of
 Blood. Wash you, make you clean: put away the
 evil of your doings from before mine Eyes: cease to
 do Evil, learn to do Well: seek Judgment, relieve
 the Oppressed, judge the Fatherless, plead for the
 Widow. Come now, and let us reason together, saith
 the Lord. That is, upon these terms, and no o-
 ther, we may meet as Friends. If ye be willing
 and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the Land; but,
 if ye refuse and Rebel, ye shall be devoured with
 the Sword, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.
 Ver. 19, 20. Seek the Lord, while he may be found: call ye upon
 him, while he is near; but to that end, let the
 Wicked forsake his way, and the Unrighteous man his
 Ch. 55. 6, 7. thoughts, &c. Then shalt thou call, and the Lord
 Ch. 58. shall answer: Thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here

I am. If thou takest from the midst of thee the Yoke, Verse 6.
 &c. the bands of Wickedness before speak-
 en of. 'Tis the Prayer of a Righteous man that Jam. 5. 16.
 availeth. This our Psalmist was very sensible
 of; Therefore, saith he, I will wash mine hands
 in Innocence, so will I compass thine Altar, O Lord. Psál. 26. 6.
 The Eyes of the Lord are upon the Righteous, and his —34. 15.
 Ears are open to their Prayers. If I regard Iniquity —66. 18.
 in my Heart, the Lord will not hear me. And in
 this very Psalm, The Lord rewarded me according Psál. 18. 20, &c.
 to my Righteousness, according to the cleanness of my
 hands hath he recompensed me: For I have kept the
 ways of the Lord; and have not wickedly departed
 from my God; (or not departed from my God,
 as the wicked doth) for all his judgments are before
 me, and I did not put his Statutes from me. I was
 also upright before him, and kept my self from mine
 Iniquity. (Eschewed mine own wickedness.)
 Therefore hath the Lord recompensed me according
 to my Righteousness, according to the cleanness of
 my Hands in his Eyesight.

And yet this Psalm was most probably in-
 dited (if we keep to the series of the History, See Dr. H. in
 where 'tis first recorded, 2 Sam. 22.) after the Loc.
 Commission of those great Sins of Adultery
 with Uriah's Wife, making him Drunk, con-
 triving his Death, and Living for some consi-

derable time, before *Nathan* came to him from God under this guilt. These many expressions therefore of his Universal Uprightness must be Interpreted and Understood, as the Scripture elsewhere speaks, with the exception of that matter of *Uriah*, 1 *Kings* 15. 5. *David did that which was right in the Eyes of the Lord, and turned not aside from any thing that he commanded him, all the days of his life, save only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite.* And we are farther to remember, That, for that too, he had Repented before the Composition of this *Psal.* And Repentance, when sincere, restores to God's Favour and Acceptance, as if we were Innocent.

Thirdly, For the Prayer or Invocation it self, that must be the Exercise of all sorts of Graces, and not the Labor of our Lips only. But, more especially, this Holy Incense must have these following perfumes in it.

(1) It must be with Humility and Reverence. With Humility, in a deep sense of our Unworthiness and Distance from God, as *Creatures*, but much more as *Sinners*. No one loves a proud Begger. Such God is said to look on afar off: But he giveth Grace, sheweth Favour to the Humble. *He beareth the desire of the Humble, and will not forget their Cry, but will save them.* And

Nu. 29. 13.

Jam. 4. 6.

1 Pct. 5. 5.

Psal. 9. 12.

—10. 17.

Job 22. 29.

And then there must be a Reverence to That Majesty which we approach unto. That is a Due, we know, to all our Betters. [See *Malachi* 1. 8.] Let us therefore have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably, with reverence Hebr. 12. 28. and godly fear.

(2) With Faith. Without Faith it is impossible Heb. 11. 6. to please God; for he that cometh unto God, must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. So St. James directs. If any of you lack Wisdom, let him ask of God, who Jam. 1. 5, 6. giveth to all men liberally; but let him ask in Faith, nothing wavering: where yet Faith seems to import rather a stedfast adhering to the Christian Profession, than a General Belief of God's Being, Attributes, or Promises. See Dr. H. in loc.

(3) With Sincerity. Not out of feigned lips, or Lips of Deceit; but in Truth. The Lord is nigh Psal. 17. 1. unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in Truth, or Faithfully. And this is that which the Prophet *Isaiah* expresseth by calling on God with all the heart. Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you; and ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. And St. Paul styles it, Calling on the Lord out of a pure (that is, 2 Tim. 2. 22. an honest and upright) heart.

(4) With

Gal. 4. 18.

(4) With Zeal and Fervencie. For it is good *alwayes*, saith the Apostle, *to be zealously affected in a good matter*: But he that asks coldly, teacheth another to deny his Requests. We can never think or hope, that God will attend to those cold and drouisie Prayers, which we hardly attend unto, or mind' our selves in the utterance of them. 'Tis the *fervent Prayer of a righteous man that availeth much*. Our Blessed Saviour speaks a Parable, to learn us the Force of Importunity, both with God and Man, St. Luk. 18. We are to pray as those that are in good earnest, and sensible of the Great Concerns we call upon him about; and therefore to excite and stirre up all the Powers of our Souls thereunto, that we be not among Those, of whom the Prophet complains, *There is none that calleth upon thy Name, that stirreth up himself to take hold on Thee*.

Isa. 64. 7.

1 Cor. 13. 1, 3.

Matth. 5.

Psal. 18. 25.

Jam. 2. 13.

(5) With Charitie; for without This we are *nothing*, and *nothing profits us*. But Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercie. With the merciful Thou wilt shew thy self merciful, saith our Psalmist. But he shall have Judgment without mercie, who hath shewed no mercie; With the same measure we mete to others, God will measure to us again. And therefore he saith,

Give

Give and it shall be given to you. Forgive and it shall be forgiven. But if ye forgive not, neither will your Heavenly Father forgive you. If thou bring thy gift to the Altar; go thy way, first be reconciled to thy Brother, &c. Whoso stoppeth his ears at the Crie of the Poor, he also shall crie himself, and shall not be heard.

Luk. 6. 38.

Prov. 21. 13.

(6) We must continue our Importunity with Perseverance, without Fainting and growing weary; not contenting our selves with having once petitioned, but following on our Suit, and waiting patiently still upon God from day to day, untill he have Mercy upon us. To this purpose our Blessed Saviour spake a Parable, That men ought alwaies to pray, and not to faint.

Psal. 25. 5.

37. 7.

86. 3, &c.

123. 2.

Luk. 18.

And yet, (7) We must pray with a due Submission of our selves unto God's Will and Wydom, not confining him to any particular ways or methods of our own devising.

*Permites ipsis expendere Numinibus, Quid
Conveniet nobis rebusq; sit utile nostris.*

Remarkable was the Resignation of King David's Spirit unto God Almighty's pleasure. If I shall find favour in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me again,----- but if he Thus say, I have no delight

2 Sam. 15. 23.

26.

delight in Thee ; behold here am I, let him do to me as seemeth good unto him. 'Tis the Petition our Blessed Saviour hath taught us, *Thy will be done* ; and such was his own Example to us : Father, if it be possible let *This Cup pass from me*. Nevertheless not what I will, (not as I will) but *Thy will be done*. We must own that God is Righteous in whatsoever befalls us, and be ready to apologize for his Providence. 'Tis of his Mercie alone that we are not consumed, and our only Hope is, That his Compassions fail not.

(8) We must be sure that we tender up our Requests unto God in the prevailing Name of Jesus Christ, his Beloved Son, our Great and only High-Priest, Mediator and Advocate ; by whom we have received the Atonement, and who ever liveth to make intercession. Not for our Righteousness, saith the Prophet Daniel, but for the Lord's sake ; [*Propter Christum*, as Castalio there notes,] so we are taught to conclude all our Prayers. The Direction and Encouragement comes from our Blessed Saviour himself : *Whatsoever ye shall ask in my Name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my Name, I will do it.*— Do all therefore in the Name of Jesus Christ, saith the

Dan. 9. 17, 18.

Joh. 14. 13, 14.

Col. 3. 17.

the Apostle, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

Lastly, Our *Prayers* must be followed with *suitable Endeavours*. We must not only *Ask*, but *seek* and *knock* too; that is, enquire after the most probable and likely *Means*, and be diligent and industrious to remove the *Impediments* in our way; as a Reverend Person ingeniously Glosseth on Those words. We must be like the Good Pilot, that hath his hand to the Helm, as well as his Eye to Heaven. We must not be lazy and idle Petitioners; like the Countrey-man in the Fable, that contented himself barely with crying out to *Hercules* to help him out of the mire. Remarkable is That of *Nehemiah*: *Nevertheless we made a*

Mr. Hooker's
Serm. in the
end of Bishop
Sandersons life.

Nehem. 4. 5.

Prayer unto our God, saith he, and set a Watch against them, (the Enemies) day and night because of them. 'Tis an excellent Rule of Hierocles:

[ὁ ἐπαιζόμεθα καὶ οὐκ ᾤμεθα, καὶ ὁ οὐκ ᾤμεθα καὶ ἐπαιζόμεθα] *In Pythag.*

What we endeavour, let us pray for; and what we pray for, let us also endeavour. There must be all along, saith he, [ἡ ἐνότης καὶ ἡ συνέτης ἐν ἡμῶν,] an union of Prayer and Endeavour; we must neither be for [ἄθεον ἀπετηρ,] an Atheistical and Godless or graceless Endeavour, nor [ἀνεργητικὸν οὐχὴν,] an Idle and inoperative Prayer.

Now having said thus much of the General Qualifications, which must accompany our Calling upon God, to render it successful : Let me yet annex *Two* more, that are very proper to our *publick Devotion* : And so our Prayers will still be the more prevalent, if attended

(1.) With *Fasting*. And,

(2) With *Unanimity*.

First, *Fasting* is to be added unto Prayer, both as a Means to render us more attentive and fervent in the same, and as a Testimony of our Humiliation before God in the Confession of our Sins, and judging our selves unworthy to be any longer sustained in Life by God, chastening and afflicting our Souls in his presence, by voluntary Penance, for our manifold Transgressions and Excesses. There are some Devils not to be cast out, but by *Prayer and Fasting*, as our Blessed Saviour acquaints us. And we may well reckon the Devil of cruel Treachery and Perfidiousness in that number. This hath been the constant way of the Church of God in all great Exigencies, by *Fasting* together with Prayer to call upon God, as you may read in *Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Isaiah, Daniel, &c.* Turn ye to me, saith the Lord by his Prophet *Joel*, with all your heart, and with *Fasting*, and with *Weeping*,
and

Mat. 17. 21.

Joel 2.

and with Mourning; and rent your Heart and not your Garment, [that is, not your Garment only. Let there not be only the external signs of Humiliation and Mourning, but the Thing signified by them; both Sign and Thing signified together;] who knoweth if he will return and repent, and leave a Blessing behind him? [This, to be sure, is the likeliest way of speeding:] He adds therefore, Blow the Trumpet in Sion, sanctifie a Fast, call a solemn Assembly; Gather the People, sanctifie the Congregation, assemble the Elders: Gather the Children, and those that suck the Breasts: Let the Bridegroom go forth of his Chamber, and the Bride out of her Closet: Let the Priests the Ministers of the Lord weep between the Porch and the Altar, and let them say, Spare thy people, O Lord. Where we find, That the Fast must be general, when we call upon God for a General Blessing; and all that are concerned in the Effect, should be also in the Means to it. And whatever some vain people judge of the needlessness or Indifference of Fasting, God takes it extremely ill, if any under publick Calamities comply not with this Prescription. In that day, saith the Prophet, did the Lord God of Hosts call to weeping and to mourning, and to baldness, and to girding with

Isa. 22, 12, 13,
14.

Sackcloth; and Behold Joy and Gladness, slaying Oxen and killing Sheep, eating Flesh and drinking Wine.----- And it was revealed in mine ears by the Lord of Hosts, surely This iniquity shall not be purged from you, till ye die, saith the Lord God of Hosts.

Secondly, We are to call upon God with Consent and Unanimity, that we may be as joint Supplicants, besieging Heaven, as it were, with an holy Violence in our united Importunities for Mercy. So the Prophet Zephaniah hath it, That they may call upon the Name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent, or with one shoulder. And thus we read of the Primitive Christians; They were all [*ὁμοθυμαδον*,] with one accord in one place. And, when St. Peter was in Prison, Prayer was made without ceasing (or instant and earnest Prayer was made) of the Church unto God for him.--- Many were gathered together Praying. To such Assemblies now, as These, that Promise of our Blessed Saviour reacheth with Advantage: I say unto you, that, if Two of you shall agree on Earth touching any thing that they shall ask,---- For, where Two or Three are gather'd together in my Name, there am I in the midst of them. Much more then, where there are many Two's and Three's, a whole Nation, at the same time upon their knees

Zeph. 3. 9.

Act. 2. 1.

Ch. 12. 5. 12.

Mat. 18. 19, 20.

knees together (if other requisits are not wanting) may they be sure of obtaining that thing, which they ask in particular, or somewhat better in the room of it.

This is the advantage of publick and common Prayers, (*μία δέησις, εἰς πάντας, Ignatius*). calling upon God in and with his Church, that he would send both King and People help from his Sanctuary, and strengthen them out of *Sion*.¹ Psal. 20.

And thus much now for the second point, the Duty or Practice here resolved upon, calling upon the Lord, with those several qualifications which will render it most effectual and successful.

It remains in the Third place, that I add a few words also of the special Character annexed unto the object of our Psalmists invocation, *Who is worthy to be praised.* I will call on the Lord who is worthy to be praised.

The word is capable of a double rendring, *Who is worthy to be praised, or whom I praise.* And accordingly Expositors render it differently; but both waies to a purpose very fit to be observed diligently by us [Ixxii. κύριον αἰνέσθαι in 2 Sam. 22. but here, αἰνῶν ἐπικαλέσθαι, and the Lat. accordingly, *Invocabo Dominum. laudabilem vel laudatum. & laudans invocabo.*]

(1) *I will call on the Lord, who is (Omni laude dignissimus) worthy of all Praise*; the most lovely Object of Veneration. And so it trains us up to the highest thoughts of that Adorable Object we call upon. *Worthy to be praised*, is the Sum and Abstract of all his Perfections together; and therefore prompts us to Approach unto him with Good and Valuable Thoughts of him: not as a cruel Tyrant, delighting in his Creatures Miseries and Torments: not as an hard Master, with-holding from his Servants, more than is meet; but a most Gracious Lord, as willing as he is able to Help and Relieve us; a most Indulgent Father, as far above all Earthly Parents in Wisdom, Power, goodness and readiness to hear, and supply his Childrens wants, as Heaven is above Earth.

And here I might observe to you farther, that it is the Holy Prudence of Pious Men, frequently exemplified in Sacred Writ, to call upon God under such Appellations, Titles, or Attributes as are most agreeable to the matter of their present Petition, and fittest to Animate and Encourage their Hopes of receiving from him. So doth the *Psalmist* here in effect, *I will call on the Lord, who is worthy to be praised*,

praised, viz. as for his Power and Wisdom and Goodness at *all times*, so for his abundant Mercy, which I have already had a frequent experience of, &c.

(2) I will call upon him, whom I also praise, rendering up my *Thanksgivings* for mercies already bestowed, while I offer up afresh *Petitions* for renewed favours from him; and thus gathering encouragement, from what I have already received, to continue my Dependence chearfully upon him, and Faith in him for the future. There is a great consent of Interpreters this way.

I will praise the Lord and call upon him. So the Arabic. In a Song or Hymn I pour out Prayers. So the Chaldee. I will call upon him with Praises. So R. Sol. Praising him with Prayers. So Apollinarius. i. e. joyning of Praises and Requests, Doxologies and Letanies together. When I shall have praised him first for his past Benefits, I will then call upon him for those yet to come. So a Latin M. S. Having celebrated the Lord with these *Encomiums*, (viz. of the precedent Verse) I will now call upon him. So Clarius. Invocabo laudatum. I will call upon him being praised, that is, in a Poetical Phrase, I will first praise him, and then call upon him. He signifies hereby, as Mr. Calvin Notes, [*preces suas*]

See Dr. H. &
Vicar's Decaplt.
in Loc.

Dr. H.

suas

suas laudibus mistas fore] That his Prayers shall be mingled with Praises and Thanksgivings, according to that of the 116 Psalm, *I will take the Cup of Salvation, and call upon the Name of the Lord, Vers. 13. And again, Offer the Sacrifice of Thanksgiving, and call on the Name of the Lord, Vers. 17.* So is the Apostolical Direction. *In every thing by Prayer and Supplication, with Thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God.* We are at the same time to testify both our *Gratitude and Dependence*; and *Thankfulness* for what we have received, is one effectual way of obtaining what we want. I will therefore call on the Lord with a grateful acknowledgment of his former Goodness, gathering encouragement from thence still to continue my Petitions unto him, who hath already so well deserved of me. The Mercies he hath vouchsafed me hitherto are not only so many *Essaies* of his power and readiness to relieve me, but also so many *Pawns* and *Pledges* for the future; and therefore to my Songs of Praise I cheerfully add my most *Humble and Earneſt Requests*: And, thus doing, never fail of a *Gracious return* from him.

Phil. 4. 6.



Dr. H. Par.

Which leads us to the second part of the Text, namely, the Psalmist's motive to his Resolution and Practice from the assured good success

cess of it. So shall I be safe from mine Enemies.
And this I shall little more than gloss upon.

Be mine Enemies never so Potent and Formidable; for Multitude, never so many; an Host of Devils and Sons of Belial; for Power, never so strong; for Malice, never so spiteful and cruel; for Policie, never so cunning; in their Assaults, never so violent; in their Confederacies, never so combined; in their Plots, never so secret: I shall, nevertheless, be saved from them all, and remain secure by the Divine interposure on my behalf.

Dwelling in the secret place of the most High, Psal. 91. I shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. There shall no Evil befall me, neither shall any Plague come nigh my Dwelling; for he shall give his Angels charge over me, to keep me in all my waies. He will Answer me, whensoever I call; will be with me in Trouble; will Deliver and Honour me; with long life will he satisfie me, and shew me his Salvation.

All Salvation is of the Lord, and he hath a peculiar regard in his saving Providence unto Kings. It is He that giveth Salvation unto Psal. 144. 10. Kings, that delivereth David his Servant from the hurtful Sword. And the like Acknowledgment we have in the close of this 18th Psalm.

St. Chrys. Li-
turg.

Great Deliverance giveth he to his King, and sheweth Mercy to his Anointed, to David and to his seed for ever. [Even the succession of Anointed ones, the whole race of Kings throughout all generations.] They are *ὑποτάκτοι* preserved by him, by whom they Reign. But yet God expects to be sought unto by them too; that they own and acknowledge their need of his Help, and put themselves into a capacity of receiving it, in the most becoming posture, from him. That therefore is the Ground of the Psalmists Resolution, *I will call on the Lord, who is worthy to be praised: so shall I be safe from mine Enemies.*

Psal. 65.

And, that we may all, in a proportion, gather the like encouragement unto this Duty of calling upon God in our Distresses and Troubles, we are to remember, that he is stiled in general, *The bearer of Prayers, unto whom all Flesh therefore is to come*; that he hath bid us *Ask, Seek, Knock*, with promise that *he who asketh shall receive*; and *he that seeketh shall find*, and to *him that knocketh it shall be opened*: That He hath assured, *If we who are Evil know how to give good Gifts to our Children, much more will He, our Heavenly Father, give Good things to them that ask him.*

And

Whosoever shall call on the Name of the Lord Joel 2. 32.
Act. 2. 21.
Rom. 10. 13.
shall be saved; saith the Prophet Joel, and it is
 thrice quoted for Confirmation in the New
 Testament. And the promise refers to as black
 and dismal Times, as we can well imagine,
 viz. such as attended the Siege of Jerusalem by
 the Romans. When there were the dreadful
 Appearances of Blood and Fire, and Pillars of
 Smoke, the Sun turned into Darknes, and the Moon
 into Bloud; even the great and terrible Day of the
 Lord come upon them. Nevertheless, in these
 circumstances, the promise is left. *Whosoever*
shall call on the Name of the Lord, shall be Delivered.

And for our farther Confirmation as to the
 publick invocation of God, with the Congregati-
 ons of his Saints in his Holy Temple, we may
 cast our Eyes on the several passages of King
 Solomon's Prayer at the Dedication of the Tem-
 ple, the House of Prayer which God himself
 testified his Acceptance of. *Hearken then, saith* 1 Kings 8.
he, unto the Supplication of thy Servant, and of thy
people Israel, when they shall pray towards this place,
and Hear thou in Heaven, and Forgive and Do,
that all the People of the Earth may know thy Name
to fear thee, as do thy People Israel, &c. We un-
 der the New Testament, to be sure, are nothing
 short of them in real Priviledges; nay, God
 hath

hath reserved *some better thing* for us. For, though we have not their Temple, yet we have their God as near unto us in all that we call upon him for; we have the Holy Spirit, whereby we cry *Abba Father*, making *intercession* within us; and we have a most powerful Advocate at God's right hand, Jesus Christ the righteous, by whom we may come with Confidence to the *Throne of Grace*, that we may obtain Mercy and find Grace, [*εἰς εὐχαρίαν βοηθεῖαν*,] for our most *seasonable* Relief in the time of need.

Hebr. 4. 16.

And now I have, with what brevity I could, run over the Text: It remains, that I apply it also briefly to the occasion of our present Assembly; which I shall best do by giving you first a short Account of Those sad and troublesome Circumstances, we are involved in; and then exhorting and encouraging of you together with my self, to practise according to this good example set before us.

But First, it will be requisite for us to *see and take notice of our Danger*. An execrable Plot is by God's Gracious Providence discover'd and brought to light (whereof the *King himself* hath given notice to the Parliament, and the *Parliament* upon such witness as they had

had before them, have agreed to declare their Belief of it.) An execrable Plot, I say, to take away his Majesties Life, subvert the Government we live under, and that Protestant Religion which we profess; And This Plot long in laying, and by the Complication of many Interests design'd at last to be brought to its Effect, through the Combination both of Foreign Powers and Domestick Treachery. A Plot, wherein we have the Venom and poyson of all former Plots in their Quintessence put together, and which, in its execution, was like to have been attended with a General Massacre. A Plot, wherein our Adversaries said, *They shall not know, neither see,* Nehem. 4. *till we come in the midst among them, and slay them.* And indeed they had found us altogether naked. We had been left without all manner of Protection and Defence, All Commissions expiring with the Kings Life; and the chief places of Trust and Importance both in Church and State predisposed of to our sworn Enemies. A Plot, the Discovery of which they sought to have prevented or discountenanc'd at its first appearance, by the horrid Murder of an Eminent Patriot employ'd in the search after it. The Persons concern'd are all Ro-
mish

rish Agents, *Priests* and *Jesuites*, and others of that Communion, abetted with Foreign Powers, as I said, who are Enemies both to our State and Religion. These our Enemies are extremely formidable in their Number, their Malice, their Cruelty, their Confederacy in Mischief against us, so linked together, that it will be hard to make a full Discovery of them. Such they are as stand accused for having had an hand in most of those publick and Tragical Calamities we have, ever since their defeated Powder-plot, groaned under. And, That which is most execrable, they act all in the Name of God, under a colour and pretence of Religion, and by vertue of the Principles of that *Romish Faith*, which baptizeth Rebellion, Faction, Sedition, Parricide and Murther by an holy Name and Title. They look on us all as a Body or pack of Hereticks, unfit to live, with whom no Faith or Fealty at all is to be kept, and whom it is but an Act of Penance, nay, of Merit, to sacrifice upon every Occasion, with the utmost hazard, for the promotion of what they miscall the *Catholick Cause*. This is the summe of our Case; and, the greatest mischief is, we yet see not into the bottom of this Damnable Con-

Contrivance against us; only are left to ghesf, if a little Fire is able to kindle a mighty Conflagration, how dismal and amazing Flames so many Incendiaries at work are likely to produce, if not timely found out and prevented. *They encourage themselves in an evil* Pfal. 64. *matter; They commune of laying Snares privily; They say, Who shall see? They search out iniquities; The inward thought of every one of them and the heart is deep.*

Now let us in the next place, I beseech you, take notice, what great reason we have to bless God Almighty, and to praise his Name, that This, so Hellish a Plot, is so far discovered already, instead of being made known to us only by the fatal Execution of it. *The God, we This day call upon, is Worthy to be praised, and to be for ever praised by us, that he hath hitherto prevented, and brought to light This Diabolical Wickedness in so many Tracks and Footsteps of it. That He hath Thus far protected and preserved our most Gracious King and all his Loyal Subjects, in the freedom and profession of the True Protestant Religion, against them that, from the Youth up of our Reformation, have troubled us. The Wisdom and Goodness of Divine*

vine Providence (is particularly to be adored by us, that what they meant and designed for a Terror to all, and so to quash the Discovery of This Cursed Plot, (the Murder I mean of his Majesties Justice employed about Examinations,) hath been turned by God into the hopeful means of awakening others to enquire into it, and thereby to make known their most impious and detestable Villanies.

We are to praise God further, that he hath put it into the Heart of our Gracious Sovereign, upon this occasion, to summon us all together jointly to Call upon God, who alone can save us, for his Blessing upon these sinful and miserable Kingdoms; and to furnish us with so excellent a Form of Confessions, Doxologies, Lessons and Prayers for the present purpose. That he hath inclined his Heart, in This Juncture, to give all the assurance that can be had from a Religious Prince to a Loyal People, of his Majesties Care and Zeal for the Protestant Interest, and the Security of it, not only during his own desired and happy Reign, but under all that shall hereafter succeed him to the World's end.

And

And now it remains, that we stirre up and encourage our selves and one another to *Call upon God for the Time to come*, both for his merciful *Protection* of our Gracious Sovereign, and in him of all his Loyal Subjects; and for his *Direction* and *Blessing* in order to the farther *Discovery* and defeating of all these cursed *Projects*: To seek unto God, and Job 5, commit our Cause unto him, who doth great things and unsearchable, marvellous things without number; who setteth up on high those that be low, that they who mourn, may be exalted to safety.

We have good *Warrant* and *Example* set before us, as you have heard, in Holy Scripture for our Imitation. Such as That of *David* in the Text; and that of *Nehemiah* read in the First Lesson for this Morning Service.

And we have the awakening *Motive* of our great Perils and Dangers to spur us on to follow these excellent *Presidents*. We have not only our own personal *Interest* lying wholly at stake, but That of our Families, nay, That of our Children's Children, and Posterities in all Ages yet to come; That, I should have said in the First place, of the *Glory* of God in the Continuance of the pro-
H fession

feſſion of True Religion among us, to urge us hereunto.

Let us therefore be excited, I beseech you, with one consent to put our Shoulders to the work, with all Humility and Reverence, Fervency and Earnestness, Faith and Importunity to call upon God in the Name of his dear Son, that we perish not; to call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised; who hath already done so great things for us, (wherein we rejoice, and for which we praise him :) That he would yet continue to be Merciful and Gracious unto us and to our Land: That He would shelter our most Religious and Gracious King *Charles* under the wings of his Good Providence, and by the Guard of his Angels, from the bloody hands of *Ishmael*, from the Sons of Violence, from the Approach of all manner of Evil: That he would manifest and bring to light the hidden works of Darkness, that They and Their Religion, and who are Abettors of them may be brought unto open shame and infamy: That He (who is never at a loss for ways and methods of bringing his counsel to pass, and can make the most despised and contemptible means effectual to humble the

the proud and mighty) would in This time of our need, perplexity and trouble stand up and appear for our Rescue and Deliverance: That He would disappoint the Devices of the *Job 5.* Crafty, so that their hands may not be able to perform their enterprise: That he would take the wise in their own Craftiness, and carry the Counsel of the froward headlong: That he would shoot at *Psal. 64.* them with his arrows, and make their own Tongue to fall upon themselves; so that all who see them, may fear, and declare the work of God, wisely considering of his doing: That he would cause them to be ensnared in those very Traps they have laid for others, and make them either the Executioners of their own Ruine, as he did the Seditious and Rebellious *Abshalom, 2 Sam. 18.* or bring them to the Gibbets, designed by them for the Innocent, as he did the powerful and revengefull *Haman: Esther 7.* That, as of his preventing Grace and Goodness he hath mercifully begun to Discover and make them to Fall, so he would vouchsafe to perfect This work of Mercy to us, in their hearty Conversion and Repentance, if it may be, or in their utter Confusion.

And, that we may succeed in these our Prayers unto God, let us, I beseech you, Hum-

ble our selves deeply and sincerely in his presence for all our former Sins, whereby we have provoked him to Anger and Displeasure against us. Let us turn unto him with Fast-ing, and Weeping and Supplication, turning from all our Transgressions, which we this Day make Confession of; in particular our monstrous Ingratitude unto God Almighty for all the Miracles of his Mercy and Goodness towards us: our ill Returns and Requitals of all his signal Benefits from time to time conferr'd upon us.

Unless we are thus *truly Penitent* for our Sins past, and reconcil'd to Gods Favour, we are not fit Mediators for our selves or others in this Trouble and Distress. Nay, instead of At-toning God Almighty, and procuring Mercy from him, we partake with the Enemy in bringing down his Curse upon us, and the So-ciety whereof we are Members. They are therefore Rebels and Traitors, so farr, to their King and Country, who refuse this Day to Humble themselves under God's mighty Hand, and so to turn unto him, and to seek his Face; or, who allow themselves in the Practice of that Wickedness, whereby they may farther provoke Heaven against us; or
who,

who, *Abaz-like*, In the time of this Distress Tresp^s 2 Chron. 28. 22.
pass yet more against the Lord.

*But if we Confess and Forsake our Sins, we are in the certain way to obtain Mercy; Mercy for our selves, and Mercy for the Land of our Nativity; Mercy for this present Generation, and Mercy for that which is to follow. We may then be admitted to call upon God with grounded hopes of his grace and favour towards us. We have then Encouragment to depend upon Him and expect a Blessing from Him, as the success of this Days performance. For all things are naked and open to his All-seeing Eye, and none can dig so deep as to hide their Counsels from him: and his Hand can reach them too, wheresoever they are; his Power is infinite. He is never to seek for waies and means to blast and defeat the most Malitious, and Politick, and Secret, and Combined Machinations of any in order to our Destruction. Nay, we may confidently rely upon his *Word of Promise* for it, that He will Hear and Answer us, and so we shall be safe from all our Enemies.

*Which God of his Infinite Mercy grant, for
 Christ his sake, &c. Amen.*

T H E E N D.